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THE
CATECHISM

AUTHORITATIVELY SET FORTH BY

King Edward the Sixth

A.D. 1553.

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THE CATECHISM here contained was authoritatively set forth for the use "of all Schoolmasters throughout England," by Letters Patent and Injunction of His Majesty KING EDWARD VI., bearing date May, 1553. It is generally attributed to DR. PONET, (or POYNET,) Bishop of Winchester, and was duly examined and approved by "certain Bishops, and other learned men," among whom were CRANMER, RIDLEY, and others. It is especially worthy of notice as having been, in the words of BISHOP RANDOLPH, "the last work of the Reformers in that reign: whence it may fairly be understood to contain, as far as it goes, their ultimate decision; and to represent the sense of the Church of England, as then established."* Under QUEEN MARY it was suppressed and burnt, and was the "Catechismus Reprobatus" of her first Convocation.† Copies of it are now very rare. If, according to ARCHBISHOP WAKE, "in THIS the complete model of our Church Catechism was laid," its republication in an attainable form, will be useful to enable the student to compare and illustrate the existing document, with the fuller and more specific testimony of the undoubted Reformation authorities.

* Enchir. Theol., vol. i, p. 6.

† Cardwell's Synodalia, vol. ii, p. 426.

THE
CATECHISM.



T is the duty of them all, whom CHRIST hath redeemed by his death, that they not only be servants to obey, but also children to inherit: so to know which is the true trade of life, and that God liketh, that they may be able to answer to every demand of religion, and to render account of their faith and profession.

And this is the plainest way of teaching, which not only in philosophy Socrates, but also in our religion Apollinarius, hath used: that both by certain questions, as it were by pointing, the ignorant might be instructed; and the skilful put in remembrance, that they forget not what they have learned. We therefore having regard to the profit, which we ought to seek in teaching of youth; and also to shortness, that in our whole schooling there should be nothing, either overflowing or wanting; have conveyed the whole sum into a dialogue, that the matter itself might be the plainer to perceive, and we the less stray in other matters beside the purpose. Thus then beginneth the Master to appose his Scholar.

A

Master. Sith* I know (dear son) that it is a great part of my duty, not only to see that thou be instructed in good letters, but also earnestly and diligently to examine what sort of religion thou followest, in this thy tender age: I thought it best to oppose thee by certain questions, to the intent I may perfectly know, whether thou hast well or ill travailed† therein. Now therefore tell me (my son) what religion that is which thou professest.

Scholar. That, good master, do I profess, which is the religion of the LORD CHRIST; which in the xi. of the Acts is called the christian religion.

Master. Dost thou then confess thyself to be a follower of christian godliness and religion, and a scholar of our LORD CHRIST?

Scholar. That forsooth do I confess, and plainly and boldly profess: yea, therein I account the whole sum of all my glory, as in the thing which is both of more honour, than that the slenderness of my wit may attain unto it; and also more approaching to God's majesty, than that I by any feat of utterance may easily express it.

Master. Tell me then (dear son) as exactly as thou canst, in what points thou thinkest that the sum of christian religion standeth.

Scholar. In two points, that is to say: true faith in God, and assured persuasion conceived of all those things, which are contained in the holy scriptures; and in charity, which belongeth both to God and to our neighbour.

Master. That faith which is conceived by hearing and reading of the word, what doth it teach thee concerning God?

* Since. † Laboured.

Scholar. This doth it principally teach : that there is one certain nature, one substance, one ghost and heavenly mind, or rather an everlasting Spirit, without beginning or ending, which we call God : whom all the people of the world ought to worship, with sovereign honour, and the highest kind of reverence. Moreover out of the holy words of GOD, which by the prophets and the beloved of Almighty God are in the holy books published, to the eternal glory of His name, I learn the law and the threatening thereof; then the promises and the gospel of God. These things, first written by Moses and other men of God, have been preserved whole and uncorrupted, even to our age: and since that, the chief articles of our faith have been gathered into a short abridgement, which is commonly called the Creed, or Symbol, of the Apostles.

Master. Why is this abridgement of the faith termed with the name of a symbol?

Scholar. A symbol is as much to say, as a sign, mark, privy token, or watchword, whereby the soldiers of one camp are known from their enemies. For this reason the abridgement of the faith, whereby the Christians are known from them that be no Christians, is rightly named a Symbol.

Master. First tell me somewhat, what thou thinkest of the law ; and then afterwards of the Creed or Symbol.

Scholar. I shall do (good master) with a good will as you command me. The Lord God hath charged us by Moses, that we have none other God at all, but Him; that is to say, that we take Him alone for our one only God, our Maker and Saviour, that we reverence not nor worship any portraiture or any image whatsoever, whether

it be painted, carved, graven, or by any mean fashioned howsoever it be: that we take not the name of our **Lord** God in vain; that is, either in a matter of no weight or of no truth. Last of all, this ought we to hold stedfastly and with devout conscience, that we keep holily and religiously the sabbath day; which was appointed out from the other for rest and service of God.

Master. Very well. Now hast thou rehearsed unto me the laws of the first table: wherein is, in a sum, contained the knowledge and true service of God. Go forward and tell me, which be the duties of charity, and our love toward men.

Scholar. Do you ask me (master) what I think of the other part of the law, which is commonly called the second table?

Master. Thou sayest true, my son: that is it indeed that I would fain hear of.

Scholar. I will in few words dispatch it, as my simple wit will serve me. Moses hath knit it up in a short sum: that is, that with all loving affection we honour and reverence our father and mother; that we kill no man; that we commit no adultery;* that we steal nothing; that we bear false witness against none: last of all, that we covet nothing that is our neighbour's.

Master. How is that commandment, of the honouring father and mother, to be understood?

Scholar. Honour of father and mother containeth love, fear, and reverence, yea, and it further standeth in obeying, succouring, defending, and nourishing them, if need require. It bindeth us also most humbly, and with most natural affection, to obey the magistrate, to

* Adultery.

reverence the ministers of the church, our schoolmasters, with all our elders, and betters.

Master. What is contained in that commandment, Do not kill?

Scholar. That we hate, wrong, or revile no man. Moreover it commandeth us, that we love even our foes, do good to them that hate us, and that we pray for all prosperity and good hap to our very mortal enemies.

Master. The commandment of not committing adultery, what thinkest thou it containeth?

Scholar. Forsooth this commandment containeth many things; for it forbiddeth, not only to talk with another man's wife, or any other woman unchastely: but also to touch her, yea, or to cast an eye at her wantonly: or with lustful look to behold her: or by any dishonest mean to woo her: either ourselves, or any other in our behalf: finally, herein is debarred all kind of filthy and straying lust.

Master. What thinkest thou of the commandment, not to steal?

Scholar. I shall shew you, as briefly as I have done the rest, if it please you to hear me. It commandeth us, to beguile no man: to occupy no unlawful wares: to envy no man his wealth: and to think nothing profitable, that either is not just, or differeth from right and honesty: briefly, rather willingly leese* that is thine own, than thou wrongfully take that is another's, and turn it to thine own commodity.

Master. How may that commandment be kept, of bearing no false witness?

Scholar. If we neither ourselves speak any false or

* Lose.

vain lie: nor allow it in other, either by speech or silence, or by our present company. But we ought always to maintain truth, as place and time serveth.

Master. Now remaineth the last commandment, of not coveting any thing that is our neighbour's: what meaneth that?

Scholar. This law doth generally forbid all sorts of evil lusts: and commandeth us to bridle and restrain all greedy unsatisfiable desire of our will, which holdeth not itself within the bounds of right and reason: and it willeth that each man be content with his estate. But whosoever coveteth more than right, with the loss of his neighbour, and wrong to another; he breaketh and bitterly looseth the bond of charity, and fellowship among men. Yea, and upon him (unless he amend) the LORD GOD, the most stern revenger of the breaking His law, shall execute most grievous punishment. On the other side, he that liveth according to the rule of these laws, shall find both praise and bliss, and GOD also his merciful and bountiful good LORD.

Master. Thou hast shortly set out the ten commandments: Now then tell me, how all these things, that thou hast particularly declared, CHRIST hath in few words contained, setting forth unto us in a sum the whole pith of the law?

Scholar. Will you that I knit up in a brief abridgement all that belongeth both to GOD and to men?

Master. Yea.

Scholar. CHRIST saith thus: Thou shalt love the LORD thy GOD, with all thy heart: with all thy soul: with all thy mind: and with all thy strength. This is

the greatest commandment in the law. The other is like unto this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Upon these two commandments hang the whole law, and the Prophets.

Master. I will now that thou tell me further, what law is that which thou speakest of; that which we call the law of nature? or some other besides?

Scholar. I remember, master, that I learned that of you long ago, that it was engraffed by God in the nature of man, while nature was yet sound and uncorrupted. But after the entrance of sin, although the wise were somewhat after a sort not utterly ignorant of that light of nature; yet was it by that time so hid from the greatest part of men, that they scant* perceived any shadow thereof.

Master. What is the cause, that God willed it to be written out in tables; and that it should be privately appointed to one people alone?

Scholar. I will shew you. By original sin and evil custom, the image of God in man was so at the beginning darkened, and the judgment of nature so corrupted, that man himself doth not sufficiently understand, what difference is between honesty and dishonesty, right and wrong. The bountiful God therefore, minding to renew that image in us, first wrought this by the law written in tables, that we might know ourselves, and therein, as it were in a glass, behold the filth and spots of our soul, and stubborn hardness of a corrupted heart; that by this mean yet, acknowledging our sin, and perceiving the weakness of our flesh, and the wrath of God fiercely bent against us for sin, we might the more fervently long for

* Scarcely.

our Saviour CHRIST JESUS; which by His death and precious sprinkling of His blood hath cleansed and washed away our sins: pacified the wrath of the Almighty Father: by the holy breath of His Spirit createth new hearts in us: and reneweth our minds after the image and likeness of their Creator, in true righteousness and holiness. Which thing neither the justice of the law, nor any sacrifices of Moses were able to perform. And that no man is made righteous by the law, it is evident: not only thereby, that the righteous liveth by faith; but also hereby, that no mortal man is able to fulfil all that the law of both the tables commandeth. For we have hindrances that strive against the law: as the weakness of the flesh: froward appetite, and lust naturally engendered. As for sacrifice, cleansings, washings, and other ceremonies of the law: they were but shadows, likenesses, images and figures of the true and everlasting sacrifice of JESUS CHRIST, done upon the cross; by the benefit whereof alone all the sins of all believers, even from the beginning of the world, are pardoned, by the only mercy of God, and by no desert of ours.

Master. I hear not yet, why Almighty God's will was to declare his secret pleasure to one people alone, which was the Israelites.

Scholar. Forsooth that had I almost forgotten. I suppose it was not done for this intent as though the law of the x. commandments did not belong generally to all men; forasmuch as the LORD our God is not only the God of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles: but rather this was meant thereby, that the true Messias, which is our CHRIST, might be known at his coming into the

world: who must needs have been born of that nation, and none other, for true performance of the promise. For the which cause, God's pleasure was to appoint out for Himself one certain people, holy, sundered from the rest, and as it were peculiarly His own; that by this mean His divine word might be continually kept holy, pure, and uncorrupted.

Master. Hitherto thou hast well satisfied me, dear son. Now let us come to the Christian Confession, which I will that thou plainly rehearse unto me.

Scholar. It shall be done. I believe in God, the Father Almighty: maker of heaven and earth. And in JESU CHRIST, His only Son, our Lord: which was conceived by the Holy Ghost: born of the Virgin Mary: suffered under Ponce Pilate: was crucified: dead: and buried. He went down to hell: the third day He rose again from the dead. He went up to heaven: sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty: from thence shall He come, to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost. I believe the holy universal church: the communion of saints: the forgiveness of sins: the rising again of the flesh: and the life everlasting.

Master. All these (my son) thou hast rehearsed generally and shortly. Therefore thou shalt do well to set out largely all that thou hast spoken particularly; that I may plainly perceive what thy belief is concerning each of them. And first I would hear of the knowledge of God, afterward of the right serving of Him.

Scholar. I will with a good will obey your pleasure (dear master) as far as my simple wit will suffer me. Above all things we must stedfastly believe and hold;

that God Almighty, the Father, in the beginning, and of nothing, made and fashioned this whole frame of the world, and all things whatsoever are contained therein: and that they all are made by the power of His Word, that is of JESU CHRIST the Son of God. Which thing is sufficiently approved by witness of scriptures. Moreover that, when He had thus shapen all creatures, He ruled, governed and saved them by His bounty and liberal hand: hath ministered, and yet also ministereth most largely all that is needful, for maintenance and preserving of our life: that we should so use them, as behoveth mindful and godly children.

Master. Why dost thou call God Father?

Scholar. For two causes: the one, for that He made us all at the beginning, and gave life unto us all: the other is more weighty, for that by His Holy Spirit and by faith He hath begotten us again: making us His children: giving us His kingdom and the inheritance of life everlasting, with JESU CHRIST His own, true and natural Son.

Master. Seeing then God hath created all other things to serve man: and made man to obey, honour and glorify Him: what canst thou say more of the beginning and making of man?

Scholar. Even that which Moses wrote: that God shaped the first man of clay: and put into him soul and life: then, that He cast Adam in a dead sleep, and brought forth a woman, whom He drew out of his side, to make her a companion with him of all his life and wealth. And therefore was man called Adam, because he took his beginning of the earth; and the woman

called Eve, because she was appointed to be the mother of all living.

Master. What image is that, after the likeness whereof thou sayest that man was made?

Scholar. That is most absolute righteousness and perfect holiness: which most nearly belongeth to the very nature of Gon: and most clearly appeared in CHRIST, our new Adam. Of the which in us there scant are to be seen any sparkles.

Master. What? are there scant to be seen?

Scholar. It is true forsooth: for they do not now so shine, as they did in the beginning, before man's fall: forasmuch as man by the darkness of sins, and mist of errors, hath corrupted the brightness of this image. In such sort hath Gon in His wrath wreaked Him upon the sinful man.

Master. But I pray thee tell me, wherefore came it thus to pass.

Scholar. I will shew you. When the LORD Gon had made the frame of this world, He himself planted a garden, full of delight and pleasure, in a certain place eastward, and called it Eden: wherein, beside other passing fair trees, not far from the midst of the garden was there one specially called the tree of life, and another called the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Herein the LORD of His singular love placed man: and unto him the garden to dress, and look unto:

erty to eat of the fruits of all the trees of
t the fruit of the tree of knowledge of

The fruit of this tree if ever he tasted,
t fail die for it. But Eve, deceived by

the devil counterfeiting the shape of a serpent, gathered of the forbidden fruit: which was for the fairness to the eye to be desired: for the sweetness in taste to be reached at: and pleasant for the knowledge of good and evil: and she eat thereof, and gave unto her husband to eat of the same. For which doing they both immediately died; that is to say, were not only subject to the death of the body, but also lost the life of the soul, which is righteousness. And forthwith the image of God was defaced in them: and the most beautiful proportion of righteousness, holiness, truth, and knowledge of God, was confounded and in a manner utterly blotted out. There remained the earthly image, joined with unrighteousness, guile, fleshly mind, and deep ignorance of godly and heavenly things. Hereof grew the weakness of our flesh: hereof came this corruption, and disorder of lusts and affections: hereof came that pestilence: hereof came that seed and nourishment of sins wherewith mankind is infected, and it is called sin original. Moreover thereby nature was so corrupted and overthrown, that unless the goodness and mercy of Almighty God had holpen us by the medicine of grace, even as in body we are thrust down into all wretchedness of death, so must it needs have been, that all men of all sorts should be thrown into everlasting punishment and fire unquenchable.

Master. Oh the unthankfulness of men! But what hope had our first parents, and from thenceforth the rest, whereby they were relieved?

Scholar. When the LORD God had both with words and deeds chastised Adam and Eve (for He thrust them

both out of the garden with a most grievous reproach), He then cursed the serpent, threatening him, that the time should one day come, when the Seed of the woman should break his head. Afterward the Lord God stablished that same glorious and most bountiful promise: first with a covenant made between Him and Abraham, by circumcision, and in Isaac his son: then again by Moses: last of all by the oracles of the noble prophets.

Master. What meaneth the serpent's head, and that Seed that God speaketh of?

Scholar. In the serpent's head lieth all his venom, and the whole pith of his life and force. Therefore do I take the serpent's head to betoken the whole power and kingdom, or more truly the tyranny, of the old serpent the devil. The Seed (as saint Paul doth plainly teach) is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, very God and very man: conceived by the Holy Ghost: engendered of the womb and substance of Mary, the blessed pure and undefiled maid: and was so born and fostered by her as other babes be, saving that He was most far from all infection of sin.

Master. All these foundations that thou hast laid are most true. Now therefore let us go forward to those His doings, wherein lieth our salvation and conquest against that old serpent.

Scholar. It shall be done, good master. After that CHRIST Jesus had delivered in charge to His Apostles that most joyful and in all points heavenly doctrine, the gospel, which in Greek is called *Evangelion*, in English good tidings: and had as by sealing stablished the same with tokens, and miracles innumerable, whereof all His

life was full: at length was He sore scourged: mocked with potting, scorning, and spitting in His face: last of all His hands and feet bored through with nails: and He fastened to a cross. Then He truly died, and was truly buried: that by His most sweet sacrifice He might pacify His Father's wrath against mankind; and subdue him by His death, who had the authority of death, which was the devil: forasmuch not only the living, but also the dead, were they in hell, or elsewhere, they all felt the power and force of this death: to whom lying in prison (as Peter saith) CHRIST preached, though dead in body, yet relieved in spirit. The third day after He uprose again, alive in body also: and with many notable proofs, the space of forty days, He abode among His disciples, eating and drinking with them. In whose sight He was conveyed away in a cloud, up into heaven, or rather above all heavens: where He now sitteth at the right hand of God the Father: being made LORD of all things, be they in heaven, or in earth: King of all kings: our everlasting and only high Bishop: our only attorney: * only mediator, only peace-maker between God and men. Now since that He is entered into His glorious majesty; by sending down His Holy Spirit unto us (as He promised) He lighteneth our dark blindness: moveth, ruleth, teacheth, cleanseth, comforteth, and rejoiceth our minds: and so will He still continually do, till the end of the world.

Master. Well, I see thou hast touched the chief Articles of our religion, and hast set out, as in a short abridgement, the Creed, that thou didst rehearse. Now therefore I will demand thee questions of certain points.

* One who acts for others.

Scholar. Do as shall please you, master: for ye may more perfectly instruct me in those things that I do not thoroughly understand: and put me in remembrance of that I have forgotten: and print in my mind deeper such things, as have not taken stedfast hold therein.

Master. Tell me then. If by His death we get pardon of our sins: was not that enough, but that He must also rise again from the dead?

Scholar. It was not enough, if ye have a respect either to Him or to us. For unless He had risen again, He should not be taken for the Son of God. For which cause also, while He hung upon the cross, they that saw Him upbraided Him and said: He hath saved other, but can not save Himself: Let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. But now uprising from the dead to everlasting continuance of life, He hath shewed a much greater power of His Godhead, than if by coming down from the cross He had fled from the terrible pains of death. For to die is common to all men: but to loose the bonds of death, and by His own power to rise again, that properly belongeth to JESUS CHRIST, the only-begotten son of God, the only Author of life. Moreover it was necessary, that He should rise again with glory, that the sayings of David and other prophets of God might be fulfilled; which told before, that neither His body should see corruption: nor His soul be left in hell. As for us, we neither had been justified, nor had had any hope left to rise again, had not He risen again; as Paul doth in divers places plainly shew. For if He had remained in the prison of death, in grave: and been holden in corruption, as all men

beside: how could we have hoped for safety by Him which saved not Himself? It was meet therefore, and needful, for the part that He had in hand: and for the chief stay of our safeguard: that CHRIST should first deliver Himself from death, and afterward assure us of safety by His uprising again.

Master. Thou hast touched (my son) the chief cause of CHRIST's rising again. Now would I fain hear thy mind of His going up into heaven. What answer, thinkest thou, is to be made to them that say, It had been better for Him to tarry here with us, presently to rule and govern us? For, beside other divers causes, it is likely, that the love of the people toward their Prince, specially being good and gracious, should grow the greater by His present company.

Scholar. All these things which He should do present, that is to say, if He were in company among us, He doth them absent. He ruleth, maintaineth, strengtheneth, defendeth, rebuketh, punisheth, correcteth: and performeth all such things as do become such a Prince, or rather God Himself. All those things (I say) performeth He, which belong either to our need or profit, honour or commodity. Beside this, CHRIST is not so altogether absent from the world, as many do suppose. For albeit the substance of His body be taken up from us: yet is His Godhead perpetually present with us: although not subject to the sight of our eyes. For things that be not bodily, can not be perceived by any bodily mean. Who ever saw his own soul? No man. Yet what is there more present? or what to each man nearer, than his own soul? Spiritual things are not to be seen, but with

the eye of the spirit. Therefore he that in earth will see the Godhead of CHRIST: let him open the eyes, not of his body, but of his mind, but of his faith: and he shall see Him present, whom eye hath not seen; he shall see Him present, and in the midst of them, wheresoever be two or three gathered together in His name: he shall see Him present with us, even unto the end of the world. What said I? shall he see CHRIST present? Yea, he shall both see and feel Him dwelling within himself: in such sort as he doth his own proper soul. For He dwelleth and abideth in the mind and heart of him which fasteneth all his trust in Him.

Master. Very well: but our confession is that He is ascended up into heaven. Tell me therefore how that is to be understood.

Scholar. So use we commonly to say of him, that hath attained to any high degree or dignity: that he is ascended up, or advanced into some high room, some high place or state: because he hath changed his former case, and is become of more honour than the rest. In such case is CHRIST gone up, as He before came down. He came down from highest honour to deepest dishonour, even the dishonour and vile state of a servant, and of the cross. And likewise afterward He went up, from the deepest dishonour, to the highest honour, even that same honour which He had before. His going up into heaven, yea, above all heavens, to the very Royal throne of God, must needs be evident by most just reason, that His glory and majesty might in comparison agreeably answer to the proportion of His baseness and reproachful estate. This doth Paul teach us, in his writing to the

Philippians: He became obedient even unto death: yea, the very death of the cross. Wherefore God hath both advanced Him to the highest state of honour: and also given Him a name above all names: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of all things in heaven, earth and hell. But although He be already gone up into heaven: nevertheless by His nature of Godhead, and by His Spirit, He shall always be present in His church: even to the end of the world. Yet this proveth not that He is present among us in His body. For His Godhead hath one property: His manhood another. His manhood was create, His Godhead uncreate. His manhood is in some one place of heaven: His Godhead is in such sort eachwhere, that it filleth both heaven and earth. But to make this point plainer, by a similitude or comparing of like to like. There is nothing that doth trulier, like a shadow, express Christ, than the sun: for it is a fit image of the light and brightness of Christ. The sun doth alway keep the heaven: yet do we say that it is present also in the world: for without light there is nothing present, that is to say, nothing to be seen of any man: for the sun with His light fulfilleth all things. So Christ is lifted up above all heavens, that He may be present with all, and fully furnish all things, as S. Paul doth say. But as touching the bodily presence of Christ here in earth (if it be lawful to place in comparison great things with small), Christ's body is present to our faith: as the sun, when it is seen, is present to the eye: the body whereof, although it do not bodily touch the eye, nor be presently with it together here in earth, yet is it present to the sight, notwithstanding.

standing so large a distance of space between. So CHRIST's body, which at His glorious going up was conveyed from us: which hath left the world, and is gone unto His Father: is a great way absent from our mouth, even then when we receive with our mouth the holy sacrament of His body and blood. Yet is our faith in heaven: and beholdeth that Sun of Righteousness: and is presently together with Him in heaven, in such sort as the sight is in heaven with the body of the sun, or in earth the sun with the sight. And as the sun is present to all things by His light: so is CHRIST also in His Godhead. Yet neither can from the body the light of the sun be sundered: nor from His immortal body the Godhead of CHRIST. We must therefore so say, that CHRIST's body is in some one place of heaven, and His Godhead every where: that we neither of His Godhead make a body: nor of His body a God.

Master. I see (my son) thou art not ignorant, after what sort CHRIST is rightly said to be from us in body, and with us in spirit. But this one thing would I know of thee: why CHRIST our LORD is thus conveyed away from the sight of our eyes; and what profit we take by His going up to heaven?

Scholar. The chief cause thereof was to pluck out of us that false opinion, which sometime deceived the Apostles themselves: that CHRIST should in earth visibly reign, as other kings, and ruffling princes of the world. This error He minded to have utterly suppressed in us: and that we should think His kingdom to consist in higher things. Which thing He therefore thought fitter, because it was more for our commodity and profit, that

some such kingdom should be set up, as the foundations thereof should rest upon our faith. Wherefore it was necessary that He should be conveyed away from us, past perceiving of all bodily sense: that by this mean our faith might be stirred up and exercised to consider His government and providence, whom no sight of bodily eyes can behold. And forasmuch as He is not king of some one country alone: but of heaven and earth: of quick and dead: it was most convenient that His kingdom should be otherwise governed, than our senses may attain unto. For else He should have been constrained, sometime to be carried up to heaven: sometime to be driven down to the earth: to remove sometime into one country, sometime into another: and like an earthly prince to be carried hither and thither, by divers change of chanceable affairs. For He could not be presently with all at once, unless His body were so turned into Godhead, that He might be in all or in many places together: as Eutyches, and certain like heretics held opinion. If it so were that He might be eachwhere present with all, at one very instant time: then were He not man, but a ghost: neither should He have had a true body, but a fantastical: whereof should have sprung forthwith a thousand errors: all which He hath dispatched by carrying His body up whole to heaven. In the mean season He, remaining invisible, governeth His kingdom and commonweal, that is His church, with sovereign wisdom and power. It is for men to rule their commonweals by a certain civil policy of men: but for CHRIST and GOD, by a heavenly godlike order. But all that I have hitherto said containeth but a small parcel

of the profit, that we take by the carrying up of CHRIST's body into heaven. For there are many more things, that here might be rehearsed, whereof large store of fruit is to be gathered. But specially this may not be left unspoken: that the benefits are such, and so great, which come unto us by the death, rising again, and going up of CHRIST, as no tongue either of men or angels is able to express. And that you may know my mind herein: I will rehearse certain of the chief: whereunto, as it were two principal points, the rest may be applied. I say therefore: that both by these and other doings of CHRIST, two commodities do grow unto us: the one, that all the things that ever He hath done, for our profit and behoof He hath done them: so that they be as well our own, if we will cleave thereunto with stedfast and lively faith, as if we had done them ourselves. He was nailed to the cross: we were also nailed with Him: and in Him our sins punished. He died, and was buried: we likewise with our sins are dead, and buried: and that in such sort, that all remembrance of our sins is utterly taken out of mind. He is risen again: and we are also risen again with Him: that is, are so made partakers of His rising again and life, that from henceforth death hath no more rule over us. For the same Spirit is in us that raised up JESUS from the dead. Finally, as He is gone up into heavenly glory: so are we lifted up with Him. Albeit that these things do not now appear: yet then shall they all be brought to light, when CHRIST, the light of the world, shall shew Himself in His glory, in whom all our bliss is laid up in store. Moreover by His going up are granted us the gifts of the Holy Ghost: as

Paul doth sufficiently witness (Ephe. iv.). The other commodity, which we take by the doings of CHRIST, is: that CHRIST is set for an example unto us, to frame our lives thereafter. If CHRIST hath been dead: if He hath been buried for sin: He was so but once. If He be risen again: if He be gone up to heaven: He is but once risen: but once gone up. From henceforth He dieth no more, but liveth with God: and reigneth in everlasting continuance of glory. So if we be dead: if we be buried to sin: how shall we hereafter live in the same? If we be risen again with CHRIST: if by stedfast hope we live now in heaven with Him: heavenly and godly things, not earthly and frail, we ought to set our care upon. And even as heretofore we have borne the image of the earthly man: so from henceforward let us bear the image of the heavenly. As the LORD CHRIST never ceased to do us good, by bestowing upon us His Holy Spirit: by garnishing His church with so many notable gifts: and by perpetual praying to His Father for us: like reason ought to move us to aid our neighbour with all our endeavour: to maintain, as much as in us lieth, the bond of charity; and to honour CHRIST our Lord and Saviour, not with wicked traditions and cold devices of men, but with heavenly honour and spiritual in deed, most fit for us that give it, and Him that shall receive it, even as He hath honoured and doth honour His Father. For he that honoureth Him honoureth also the Father, of which He himself is a substantial witness.

Master. The end of the world the holy scripture calleth the fulfilling and performance of the kingdom and mystery of CHRIST, and the renewing of all things.

For (saith the Apostle Peter in his second Epistle the third chapter), We look for a new heaven, and a new earth, according to the promise of God: wherein dwelleth righteousness. And it seemeth reason that corruption, unstedfast change, and sin, whereunto the whole world is subject, should at length have an end. Now by what way, and what fashion circumstances these things shall come to pass, I would fain hear thee tell.

Scholar. I will tell you as well as I can, according to the witness of the same Apostle. The heavens shall pass away like a storm: the elements shall melt away: the earth, and all the works therein, shall be consumed with fire: as though he should say: as gold is wont to be fined: so shall the whole world be purified with fire, and be brought to his full perfection. The lesser world, which is man, following the same, shall likewise be delivered from corruption and change. And so for man this greater world (which for his sake was first created) shall at length be renewed, and be clad with another hue, much more pleasant and beautiful.

Master. What then remaineth?

Scholar. The last and general doom. For CHRIST shall come: at whose voice all the dead shall rise again, perfect and sound both in body and soul. The whole world shall behold Him, sitting in the Royal throne of His majesty: and after the examination of every man's conscience, the last sentence shall be pronounced. Then the children of God shall be in perfect possession of that kingdom of freedom from death and of everlasting life, which was prepared for them before the foundations of the world were laid. And they shall reign with CHRIST

for ever. But the ungodly that believed not, shall be thrown from thence into everlasting fire, appointed for the devil and his angels.

Master. Thou hast said enough of the again rising of the dead. Now remaineth, that thou speak of the holy church: whereof I would very fain hear thy opinion.

Scholar. I will rehearse that in few words shortly: which the holy scripture set out at large and plentifully. Afore that the LORD GOD had made the heaven and earth, He determined to have for himself a most beautiful kingdom and holy commonwealth. The apostles and the ancient fathers that wrote in Greek, called it *Ecclesia*, in English, a congregation or assembly: into the which He hath admitted an infinite number of men: that should all be subject to one king as their sovereign and only one head: Him we call CHRIST, which is as much to say as anointed. For the high bishops, and kings among the Jews, (who in figure betokened CHRIST, whom the LORD anointed with His HOLY SPIRIT,) were wont by God's appointment at their consecration to have material oil poured on them. To the furnishing of this commonwealth belong all they, as many as do truly fear, honour and call upon God, wholly applying their mind to holy and godly living; and all those that putting all their hope and trust in Him, do assuredly look for the bliss of everlasting life. But as many as are in this faith stedfast, were forechosen, predestinate, and appointed out to everlasting life, before the world was made. Witness hereof they have within in their hearts the Spirit of CHRIST, the author, earnest and unfailable pledge of their faith. Which faith only is able to

perceive the mysteries of God: only bringeth peace unto the heart: only taketh hold on the righteousness that is in CHRIST JESUS.

Master. Doth then the SPIRIT alone and faith (sleep we never so soundly, or stand we never so reckless and slothful) so work all things for us, as without any help of our own to carry us idle up to heaven?

Scholar. I use (master) as you have taught me, to make a difference between the cause and the effects. The first, principal, and most perfect cause of our justifying and salvation, is the goodness and love of God: whereby He chose us for His, before He made the world. After that, God granteth us to be called by the preaching of the gospel of JESUS CHRIST, when the SPIRIT of the Lord is poured into us: by Whose guiding and governance we be led to settle our trust in God: and hope for the performance of all His promises. With this choice is joined, as companion, the mortifying of the old man, that is of our affection and lust. From the same SPIRIT also cometh our sanctification: the love of God, and of our neighbour: justice: and uprightness of life: finally, to say all in sum, whatsoever is in us, or may be done of us, pure, honest, true and good, that altogether springeth out of this most pleasant root, from this most plentiful fountain, the goodness, love, choice and unchangeable purpose of God. He is the cause, the rest are the fruits and effects. Yet are also the goodness, choice and SPIRIT of God, and CHRIST himself, causes conjoined and coupled each with other: which may be reckoned among the principal causes of our salvation. As oft therefore as we use to say, that we are made righteous and saved

by only faith: it is meant thereby: that faith, or rather trust alone, doth lay hand upon, understand and perceive, our righteous-making to be given us of God freely; that is to say, by no deserts of our own, but by the free grace of the Almighty FATHER. Moreover faith doth engender in us the love of our neighbour, and such works as God is pleased withal. For if it be a lively and true faith, quickened by the HOLY GHOST, she is the mother of all good saying and doing. By this short tale is it evident, whence, and by what means we attain to be made righteous. For not by the worthiness of our deservings were we heretofore chosen, or long ago saved: but by the only mercy of God, and pure grace of CHRIST our Lord, whereby we were in Him made to those good works, that God hath appointed for us to walk in. And although good works cannot deserve to make us righteous before God: yet do they so cleave unto faith, that neither can faith be found without them, nor good works be anywhere without faith.

Master. I like very well this short declaration of faith and works: for Paul plainly teacheth the same. But canst thou yet further depaint me out that congregation, which thou callest a kingdom or commonweal of Christians; and so set it out before mine eyes, that it may severally and plainly be known asunder from each other fellowship of men?

Scholar. I will prove how well I can do it. Your pleasure is (master) as I take it, that I point ye out some certain congregation, that may be seen.

Master. That it is indeed: and so it shall be good for ye to do it.

Scholar. That congregation is nothing else but a certain multitude of men: which, wheresoever they be, profess the pure and upright learning of CHRIST, and that in such sort, as it is faithfully set forth in the holy testament, by the evangelists and apostles: which in all points are governed and ruled by the laws and statutes of their King and high Bishop CHRIST, in the bond of charity: which use His holy mysteries, that are commonly called sacraments, with such pureness and simplicity (as touching their nature and substance) as the apostles of CHRIST used and left behind in writing. The marks therefore of this church are; first, pure preaching of the gospel: then brotherly love, out of which, as members of all one body, springeth good will of each to other: thirdly, upright and uncorrupted use of the LORD's sacraments, according to the ordinance of the gospel: last of all, brotherly correction, and excommunication, or banishing those out of the church, that will not amend their lives. This mark the holy fathers termed discipline. This is that same church, that is grounded upon the assured rock, JESUS CHRIST, and upon trust in Him. This is that same church, which Paul calleth the pillar and upholding stay of truth. To this church belong the keys, wherewith heaven is locked and unlocked: for that is done by the ministrations of the word: whereunto properly appertaineth the power to bind and loose; to hold for guilty, and forgive sins. So that whosoever believeth the gospel preached in this church, he shall be saved: but whosoever believeth not, he shall be damned.

Master. Now would I fain hear thy belief of the HOLY GHOST.

Scholar. I confess Him to be the third person of the Holy Trinity: And sith He is equal with the Father and the Son, and of the very same nature, that He ought equally* to be worshipped with them both.

Master. Why is He called holy?

Scholar. Not only for His own holiness: but for that by Him are made holy the chosen of God, and members of Christ. And therefore have the scriptures termed Him the Spirit of sanctification or making holy.

Master. Wherein consisteth this sanctification?

Scholar. First, we be new gotten by His inward motion. And therefore said Christ, we must be new born of water, and of the Spirit. Then by His inspiration are we adopted, and as it were by choice made the children of God. For which cause He is not causeless called The Spirit of adoption. By His light are we enlightened, to understand God's mysteries. By His judgment are sins pardoned and retained. By His power is the flesh with her lusts kept down and tamed. By His pleasure are the manifold gifts dealt among the holy. Finally, by His means shall our mortal bodies be relieved. Therefore in the Author of so great gifts we do not without a cause believe, honour, and call upon Him.

Master. Well, thou hast now said sufficiently of the HOLY GHOST. But this would I hear of thee: why it immediately followeth, that we believe the holy universal church and the communion of saints.

Scholar. These two things I have alway thought to be most fitly coupled together, Because the fellowships and incorporations of other men proceed and be governed by other means and policies: but the church, which is

* Equally.

an assembly of men called to everlasting salvation, is both gathered together and governed by the Holy Ghost; of Whom we even now made mention. Which thing sith it can not be perceived by bodily sense or light of nature, is by right and for good reason here reckoned among things that are known by belief. And therefore this calling together of the faithful is called universal, because it is bound to no one special place. For God throughout all coasts of the world hath them that worship Him: which, though they be far scattered asunder by divers distance of countries and dominions, yet are they members most nearly joined of that same body, whereof Christ is the head; and have one spirit, faith, sacraments, prayers, forgiveness of sins, and heavenly bliss, common among them all: and be so knit with the bond of love, that they endeavour themselves in nothing more, than each to help other, and to build together in Christ.

Master. Seeing thou hast already spoken of the knowledge of God, and His members: I would also hear, what is the true service of God.

Scholar. First we must consider, that the right and true knowledge of God, is the principal and only foundation of God's service. The same knowledge doth foster and maintain, which in scriptures is called the beginning of wisdom. Faith and hope are the props and stays, whereupon lean all the rest that I have rehearsed. Furthermore charity, which we call love, is like an everlasting bond, by the strait knot whereof all other virtues be bound in one together, and their force increased. These be the inward parts of God's service, that is to say, which consist in the mind.

Master. What hast thou to say of the Sabbath, or the holy day, which even now thou madest mention of, among the laws of the first table?

Scholar. Sabbath is as much to say, as rest. It was appointed for only honour and service of God: and it is a figure of that rest and quietness, which they have that believe in CHRIST. For our trust in CHRIST doth set our minds at liberty from all slavish fear of the law, sin, death and hell; assuring us in the mean season, that by Him we please God, and that He hath made us His children and heirs of His kingdom: whereby there groweth in our hearts peace and true quietness of mind: which is a certain foretaste of the most blessed quiet, which we shall have in His kingdom. As for those things that are used to be done on the sabbath day, as ceremonies, and exercises in the service of God, they are tokens and witnesses of this assured trust. And meet it is, that faithful Christians, on such days as are appointed out for holy things, should lay aside unholy* works, and give themselves earnestly to religion and serving of God.

Master. What be the parts of that outward serving God, which thou saidest even now did stand in certain bodily exercises; which are also tokens of the inward serving Him?

Scholar. First, to teach, and hear the learning of the gospel: then the pure and natural use of the ceremonies and sacraments: last of all, prayer made unto God by CHRIST, and in the name of CHRIST, which without fail obtaineth the HOLY GHOST, the most assured Author of all true serving God, and upright religion.

Master. Tell me what thou callest sacraments.

* Secular.

Scholar. They are certain customable reverent doings and ceremonies ordained by CHRIST; that by them He might put us in remembrance of His benefits, and we might declare our profession, that we be of the number of them, which are partakers of the same benefits, and which fasten all their affiance in Him; that we are not ashamed of the name of CHRIST, or to be termed CHRIST's Scholars.

Master. Tell me (my son) how these two sacraments be ministered: baptism; and that which Paul calleth the supper of the LORD.

Scholar. Him that believeth in CHRIST: professeth the Articles of the Christian religion: and mindeth to be baptized (I speak now of them that be grown to ripe years of discretion, sith for the young babes their parents' or the church's profession sufficeth), the minister dippeth in, or washeth with pure and clean water only, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: and then commendeth him by prayer to God, into Whose church he is now openly as it were enrolled, that it may please God to grant him His grace, whereby he may answer in belief and life agreeably to his profession.

Master. What is the use of the Lord's supper?

Scholar. Even the very same, that was ordained by the LORD himself, JESUS CHRIST, Which (as S. Paul saith) the same night, that He was betrayed, took bread: and when He had given thanks, brake it: and said, This is My body, which is broken for you: Do this in remembrance of Me. In like manner, when supper was ended, He gave them the cup, saying: This cup is the

new testament in My blood. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink thereof, in the remembrance of Me. This was the manner and order of the LORD's supper: which we ought to hold and keep; that the remembrance of so great a benefit, the passion and death of CHRIST, be alway kept in mind; that, after that the world is ended, He may come, and make us to sit with Him at His own board.

Master. What doth baptism represent and set before our eyes?

Scholar. That we are by the Spirit of CHRIST new born, and cleansed from sin: that we be members and parts of His church, received into the communion of saints. For water signifieth the Spirit. Baptism is also a figure of our burial in CHRIST, and that we shall be raised up again with Him in a new life as I have before declared in CHRIST's resurrection.

Master. What declareth and betokeneth the supper unto us, which we solemnly use in the remembrance of the LORD?

Scholar. The supper (as I have shewed a little before) is a certain thankful remembrance of the death of CHRIST: forasmuch as the bread representeth His body, betrayed to be crucified for us; the wine standeth in stead and place of His blood, plenteously shed for us. And even as by bread and wine our natural bodies are sustained and nourished: so by the body, that is the flesh and blood of CHRIST, the soul is fed through faith, and quickened to the heavenly and godly life.

Master. How come these things to pass?

Scholar. These things come to pass by a certain secret mean, and lively working of the SPIRIT: when we

believe that CHRIST hath, once for all, given up His body and blood for us, to make a sacrifice and most pleasant offering to His heavenly FATHER; and also when we confess and acknowledge Him our only Saviour, high Bishop, Mediator, and Redeemer: to Whom is due all honour and glory.

Master. All this thou dost well understand. For me-thinketh thy meaning is: that faith is the mouth of the soul, whereby we receive this heavenly meat, full both of salvation and immortality, dealt among us, by the means of the HOLY GHOST. Now, sith we have entreated of the sacraments, pass forward to the other parts of God's service.

Scholar. I will do your commandment. There remain two things, belonging to the perfection of God's service. First, our Lord JESUS CHRIST's will was, that there should be teachers and evangelists, that is to say, preachers of the gospel: to this intent, that His voice might continually be heard sound in His church. He that coveteth (as all ought to covet) to bear the name of a Christian, may have no doubt, that he ought with most earnest affection and fervent desire endeavour himself to hear and soak into his mind the word of the LORD; not like the words of any man, but like (as it is indeed) the word of Almighty Gon. Secondarily, because all that is good, and that ought of a Christian to be desired, cometh unto us from Gon, and is by Him granted: therefore of Him we ought to require all things, and by thanksgiving acknowledge them all received of Him. Which thing He so well liketh, that He esteemeth it instead of a passing pleasant sacrifice: as it is most evident by the witness of the prophets and apostles.

Master. Hast thou any certain and appointed manner of praying?

Scholar. Yea forsooth: even the very same, that our LORD taught His disciples, and in them all other Christians. Who, being on a time required to teach them some sort of prayer, taught them this. When ye pray, quod* He, say: Our FATHER Which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation: But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, power and glory for ever. Amen.

Master. How thinkest thou? is it lawful for us to use any other words of prayer?

Scholar. Although in this short abridgment are sufficiently contained all things that every Christian ought to pray for: yet hath not CHRIST in this prayer tied us up so short, as that it were not lawful for us to use other words and manner of prayer. But He hath set out in this prayer certain principal points, whereunto all our prayers should be referred. But let each man ask of God as his present need requireth. Whatsoever ye ask the FATHER in My name (saith CHRIST), He shall give it you.

Master. Forasmuch as there is in all this prayer nothing doubtful or beside the purpose: I would hear thy mind of it.

Scholar. I do well perceive what the words do signify.

Master. Thinkest thou then that there is in it nothing dark, nothing hid, nothing hard to understand.

* Quoth.

Scholar. Nothing at all. For neither was it CHRIST's pleasure, that there should be any thing in it dark or far from our capacity, specially since it belongeth equally to all, and is as necessary for the lewd,* as the learned.

Master. Therefore declare unto me, in few words, each part by itself.

Scholar. When I say, Our FATHER which art in heaven; this do I think with myself: that it can not be but that He must hear me, and be pleased with my prayers. For I am His son (although unprofitable and disobedient), and He on the other side is my most bountiful FATHER, most ready to take pity and pardon me.

Master. Why dost thou say, He is in heaven? is He in some one certain and limited place in heaven? What meaneth that which He saith of Himself, I fill both heaven and earth; again, the heaven is my seat and the earth my footstool?

Scholar. Hereof have I spoken somewhat before: whereunto I will join this that followeth. First of all, as oft as we do say (Which art in heaven), it is as much to say as heavenly and divine. For we ought to think much higher of our heavenly FATHER than of our earthly. He is also said to be in heaven for this cause: that in that high and heavenly place the notable and wonderful works of God do the more clearly and gloriously shew themselves: and He is now declared to be in everlasting and full felicity; whereas we abide yet banished in earth full wretchedly. Moreover as the heaven by unmeasurable wideness of compass containeth all places, the earth, and the sea; and no place is there, that may be hid from the large reach of heaven, sith it is at every

* Simple, or unlearned.

instant of time to every thing present: so hereby may we understand, that God is likewise present to each thing in each place. He seeth, heareth and governeth all things; He being himself a spirit, and most far from all earthly and mortal state. Witness whereof Hieremy* the prophet. Am not I (saith the Lord) a God near unto you? And am not I a God far off? Shall any man be able to shroud himself in such a corner, that I can not espy him? This is a pithy sentence, to drive fear into us, that we offend not that Lord of so large a dominion: whereby also we are persuaded assuredly to believe, that God will hear whensoever we shall stand in need. For He is at all times and in all places present. This foundation then laid; and so sweet and pleasant entrance prepared; there followeth the first part of the Lord's prayer: wherein we require, that not only we, but also all other whosoever, may in holiness honour, reverence, and worship His name.

Master. How is that to be done?

Scholar. I shall shew you: then we do that, when leaving all those that have the name of gods, be they in heaven or in earth, or worshipped in temples, in divers shapes and images, we acknowledge Him alone our FATHER; pray to the true God, and JESUS CHRIST, His only Son, whom He hath sent; and by pure unfeigned prayer call upon Him alone, with uprightness of life and innocency.

Master. Thou hast said very well: proceed.

Scholar. In the second part we require that His kingdom come. For we see not yet all things in subjection to CHRIST: we see not the stone hewed off from the

* Jeremiah.

mountain without work of man, which all-to bruised and brought to nought the image which Daniel describeth, that the only Rock CHRIST may obtain and possess the dominion of the whole world, granted Him of His FATHER. Antichrist is not yet slain. For this cause do we long for, and pray that it may at length come to pass and be fulfilled, that CHRIST may reign with His saints, according to God's promises: that He may live and be LORD in the world, according to the decrees of the holy gospel: not after the traditions and laws of men, nor pleasure of worldly tyrants.

Master. Gon grant His kingdom may come, and that speedily!

Scholar. Moreover, sith it is the children's duty to frame their life to their father's will, and not the father's to bow to the children's pleasure: forasmuch as our will is commonly by tickling* of affections, and stirring of lusts, drawn to do those things, that God is displeased with: it is reason, that we hang wholly upon the beck of our heavenly FATHER, and wholly submit ourselves to His heavenly government. Wherefore, for this cause, we mortal men do pray, that we may in like case be obedient to His commandment, as are the sun and moon and other stars in heaven, which both by ordinary courses, and by lightening the earth with unceasant beams, execute the Lord's will continually: or that we, as the angels and other spirits divine, in all points obey Him; which bestow all their travail diligently to accomplish His godly commandments. Next after that He teacheth us, to ask of our heavenly FATHER our bread: whereby He meaneth not meat only, but also all

*Exciting.

things else needful for maintenance, and preserving of life: that we may learn, that God alone is Author of all things; Which maketh the fruits of the earth both to grow and increase to plenty. Wherefore it is meet that we call upon Him alone in prayer, Which (as David saith) alone feedeth and maintaineth all things.

Master. Some suppose this place to mean that bread, that CHRIST maketh mention of in the sixth of John: that is of the true knowledge and taste of CHRIST, that was born and died for us; wherewith the faithful soul is fed. The reason whereupon they gather this is the Greek word *epiousion*, whereby they understand supernatural, ghostly, heavenly and divine. This meaning I refuse not; for both these expositions may fitly agree with this place: but why calleth He it daily bread, which is also signified by this word *epiousion*?

Scholar. We ask daily bread, that might be always present and accompany us continually, to slake and satisfy our thirsty desire, and unsatiate stomach: lest otherwise we should be, as CHRIST sayeth, careful for to-morrow; because the morrow shall care for itself. For it shall come not without His own discommodity and care. Wherefore it is not reason, that one day should increase the evil of another. It shall be sufficient for us, daily to ask that our most bountiful FATHER is ready daily to give. Now followeth the fifth request: wherein we beseech the FATHER to forgive us our trespasses and defaults, that we have committed. This request doubtless is very necessary: sith there is no man living free from sin. Here therefore must we cast away all trust of ourselves. Here must we pluck down our courage. Here must we pray our most merciful FATHER, for the

love of JESU CHRIST His most dear and obedient Son, to pardon, forgive, and utterly blot out of His book, our innumerable offences. Here ought we in the mean season to be mindful of the covenant we make with God: That it may please God so to forgive us our trespasses, as we ourselves forgive them that trespass against us. Therefore it is necessary, that we forgive and pardon all men all their offences, of what sort or condition soever they be. If we forgive men their faults, our heavenly FATHER shall forgive us ours.

Master. Were these things (my son) thus used, there should not, at this day, thus violently reign so many brawls, so many contentions, so many and so heinous disagreements, enmities and hatreds of one man to another. But now, whereas each man so standeth in his own conceit, that he will not lose an inch of his right, neither in honour or wealth, it chanceth oft that they lose both their wealth, their honour, and their life itself withal. Yea they put from themselves and turn away the favour of God, and everlasting glory. But thou (my son) must not be ignorant of CHRIST's commandment; nor of that which Paul teacheth, that thou suffer not thyself to be overcome of evil, that is, suffer not thyself so to be seduced by any other man's offence, as to repay evil for evil, but rather overcome evil with good: I mean, by doing him good, that hath done thee evil; by using him friendly, that hath shewed himself thy most cruel foe. Now go forward to the sixth request.

Scholar. I will, with a good will, as you command me. Forasmuch as we be feeble, weak, subject to a thousand perils, a M.* temptations, easy to be overcome,

* Thousand.

ready to yield to every light occasion, either to men fraught with malice, or to our own lust and appetite, or finally to the crafty malicious serpent, the devil: Therefore we beseech our FATHER, that He bring us into no such hard escape and peril, nor leave us in the very plunge of danger; but, if it come to that point, that He rather take us away from the present mischief, and engines of the devil, the author and principal cause of all evil, than suffer us to run headlong into destruction. Now have you, good master, in few words, all that you have taught me, unless peradventure somewhat be over-slipped in the rehearsal.

Master. Because Thine is the kingdom, power and glory for ever. Amen. Why was it CHRIST's pleasure to knit up our prayer with this clause in the end?

Scholar. Partly that we should declare our assured trust, to obtain all things, that we before have required. For there is nothing which, if it be asked with faith, He is not able or not willing to give, Who ruleth and governeth all things, Who is able to do all things, Who is garnished with endless glory. These things when we rehearse, of God our FATHER, there remaineth no cause to doubt, or suspect, that we shall receive denial.

Partly by so saying, we teach ourselves, how meet it is to make our suit to God, sith beside Him none glistereth with so shining glory, none hath dominion so large, or force so great, to be able to stay Him from giving that He hath appointed according to His pleasure, or to take away that He hath already given us. And there is no evil of ours so great, that may not be put away by His exceeding great power, glory, and wisdom.

Master. I like well (my son) this thy short declaration: and I see nothing left out, that ought to have been spoken.

Scholar. But yet this one thing will I add thereto. The chief and principal thing, required in prayer, is that without all doubting we stedfastly believe, that God our Father will grant what we do ask; so that it be neither unprofitable for us to receive, nor unfit for Him to give. For he that is not assured but doubtful, let him not think (as James saith) to get any thing at the hands of God.

' *Master.* I see now (my dear son) how diligently and heedfully thou hast applied thy mind to those things that I have taught thee; how godly and upright a judgment thou hast of God's true service, and of the duties of neighbours one to another. This remaineth, that from henceforth thou so frame thy life, that this heavenly and godly knowledge decay not in thee, nor lie soulless and dead, as it were, in a tomb of flesh. But rather see that thou wholly give thyself continually and earnestly to these godly studies. So shalt thou live, not only in this present life, but also in the life to come, which is much better and blessed than this life present. For godliness (as Paul saith) hath a promise, not in this life only, but in the other. It is convenient therefore, that we earnestly follow godliness, which plainly openeth the way to heaven, if we will seek to attain thereunto. And the principal point of godliness is (as thou hast declared even now very well) to know God only: to covet Him only as the chief felicity: to fear Him as our Lord: to love and reverence Him as our Father: with His Son our Saviour JESUS CHRIST. This is He that hath

begotten and regenerated us. This is He which at the beginning gave us life and soul: which maintaineth: which blesseth us with life of everlasting continuance. To this godliness is directly contrary godlessness. As for superstition and hypocrisy, they counterfeit indeed, and resemble it, whereas nevertheless they are most far different from all true godliness: and therefore we ought to avoid them, as a pestilence, as the venom, and most contagious enemies of our soul and salvation. The next point of godliness is to love each man, as our brother: for if God did at the beginning create us all; if He doth feed and govern us; finally, if He be the cause and Author of our dwelling in this wide frame of the world: the name of brother must needs most fitly agree with us; and with so much straiter bond shall we be bound together, as we approach nearer to CHRIST, which is our brother, the first begotten and eldest: Whom he that knoweth not, he that hath no hold of, is unrighteous indeed, and hath no place among the people of God. For CHRIST is the root and foundation of all right and justice, and He hath poured into our hearts certain natural lessons, as: Do that (saith He) to another that thou wouldest have done unto thyself. Beware therefore, thou do nothing to any man, that thou thyself wouldest not willingly suffer. Measure always another by thine own mind, and as thou feelest in thyself. If it grieve thee to suffer injury; if thou think it wrong that another man doth to thee; judge likewise the same in the person of thy neighbour that thou feelest in thyself: and thou shalt perceive, that thou dost no less wrongfully in hurting another, than other do in hurting thee. Here if

we would stedfastly fasten our foot; hereunto if we would earnestly travail; we should attain to the very highest top of innocency. For the first degree thereof is to offend no man: the next to help, as much as in us lieth, all men: at least to will and wish well to all: the third (which is accounted the chief and perfectest) is to do good even to our enemies that wrong us. Let us therefore know ourselves: pluck out the faults that are in us, and in their place plant virtues: like unto the husbandmen, that first use to shrubbe and root out the thorns, brambles and weeds, out of their lay-land and unlooked to; and then each where therein scatter and throw in to the womb of the earth good and fruitful seeds, to bring forth good fruit in their due season. Likewise let us do. For first let us labour to root out froward and corrupt lusts: and afterward plant holy and fit conditions for Christian hearts. Which, if they be watered, and fattened with the dew of God's word, and nourished with warmth of the HOLY GHOST, they shall bring forth doubtless the most plentiful fruit of immortality and blessed life: which GOD hath by CHRIST prepared for His chosen, before the foundations of the world were laid. To whom be all honour and glory. Amen.

